

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF HUNTON PARISH COUNCIL
Held on Thursday 12th July 2007 at 8.00pm at Hunton Parish Hall

PRESENT: Cllr Roger Sawtell Chairman
Cllr Lorraine Redfarn
Cllr Gary Thomas
Cllr Moira Walter
David Swan Clerk

IN ATTENDANCE: Cllrs Mortimer & Parr Borough Councillors
Sue and David Heaton Editors, Hunton Herald
Mike Nichols Hon. Treasurer, Hunton Bowls Club
Hannah Percival Police Community Support Officer
Barbara Wright Resident

1. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chairman welcomed all present. Apologies were received from Cllr David StJohn and Mrs Margaret Carpenter, Bowls Club Secretary.

2. REGISTER OF MEMBERS INTERESTS

The Register was displayed. It remains available for inspection by arrangement.

The Clerk reminded Members that the Standards Board for England had prepared a revised Code of Conduct, details of which including the Model Code had been distributed. The Council provides members of the public with the right to speak and it was proposed by Lorraine Redfarn, seconded by Gary Thomas and agreed unanimously to adopt the new Code including paragraph 12(2). The Guide for Members was adopted as a standing order for this purpose.

The Clerk would make sure that the decision was advertised in the press. He would issue individual copies of the new form and guidance notes to all Members for completion and return by 9th August for despatch to the Monitoring Officer. ACTION: CLERK

3. POLICE AND NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH BUSINESS

3.1 Police Community Support Officer

The Chairman welcomed Hannah Percival who introduced herself and outlined her anticipated role in the community. An early initiative would be to establish a Police and Communities Together Newsletter. Members welcomed this and offered their support generally behalf of the village but they were very concerned that Hannah's only official means of transport round the five rural villages was to be a bicycle. The Clerk was asked to raise this with the Chief Constable. ACTION: CLERK

3.2 Crime figures

The Clerk advised the meeting that the following had been reported in the short period from 11th June to 1st July, both in Barn Hill: Theft of electric fence post and battery from a field on 13th June and diesel, whips, lines and other horse items from a garage on 18th June.

4. MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF 24th MAY AND MATTERS ARISING

The Minutes were agreed and signed as a correct record. Matters arising were listed later in the agenda.

5. FINANCE

5.1 Concurrent Functions annual return 2006/7

The Clerk issued copies of the 2006/7 return for information and Members discussed the detail of this scheme, operated by the Borough, which was so valuable to small parishes such as Hunton.

5.2 Cheque book

The Clerk reported that he had written to Nat West Bank on 16th June when the previous cheque book had nearly expired. He had raised a formal complaint. As this had been at least the fourth occasion on which this had happened he also raised a formal complaint. He had received a full reply and a promise that the mistake would not happen again. However the cheque book had still not been received and it was embarrassing not to be able to pay bills punctually. When the cheques were to hand and the bills were settled he would prepare a reconciliation and balance for Members. ACTION: CLERK

6. EXTERNAL CONTACTS

6.1 Gypsy and Traveller Conference

The Chairman reported that he had attended this event. The main teaching points were being circulated but the main lesson he had learned was how small the need appeared to be, some 32 plots. These groups of people liked to have their families nearby but were mobile. A separate briefing meeting would if required be convened to discuss this matter further. ACTION: CLERK

6.2 Citizens Advice Bureau

The Chairman was the representative on the Bureau's Board of Trustees as well as being a volunteer advisor in his own right. Both he and the Council was content for him to continue to serve on the Board. to continue. ACTION: CLERK

6.3 Other external matters

Cllr Thomas mentioned the meeting at Invicta Grammar School about the Kent International Gateway Proposal. It was agreed that although this would have only a marginal effect in the parish it would if implemented result in a further deterioration of life in Maidstone. Of greater significance here would be the development on the Syngenta site in Yalding which would lead to over 350 new houses for some 800 extra people.

7. BOROUGH COUNCILLORS BUSINESS

7.1 The caravan off Lughorse Lane

Cllr Mortimer had attended the appeal hearing as had some eight to ten local residents. From experience he thought it likely that temporary permission could be granted but he remained hopeful that the appeal would be dismissed.

7.2 Revolved budgets

Cllr Mortimer reminded the meeting of the devolved budgets held by Borough Cllrs.

7.3 closure of the Coombe Quarry Park and Ride site

Cllr Parr said that a further debate on this was still in progress but closure seemed essential to save money.

8. REPORT ON THE KING GEORGE V PLAYING FIELD

On behalf of Cllr Eatwell, the Clerk presented a brief report on the Field. In particular the AGM on 14th June had been a pleasant and forward-looking event and the Trustees were optimistic for the future. Mr Nichols and the Chairman, both of whom had also been present, shared this view. Alan Bishop had in hand the matter of indemnity insurance distinct from that under the Parish Council policy.

9. HIGHWAYS AND FOOTWAYS

9.1 Footway between Bensted Close and the Parish Hall

In response to the Clerk's letter of 22nd May to Peter Rosevere which had been copied to Keith Ferrin, KCC had written to say that a path between these points was unlikely ever to be funded by the County as it would not have sufficient priority over other projects. The writer set out the reasons why any potential scheme would be very costly, pointed out that the accident record on this stretch of road was low and said that although the Parish Council could if it wished pursue other means of funding the design would have to be in accordance with KCC guidelines. There was a full discussion and the Clerk was asked to

write to question some of the assertions made in the letter. In particular he was asked to point out that all National, Regional, County and Borough plans the use of cycles and walking was encouraged. There was an opportunity to do this in Hunton which was being brushed aside notwithstanding the many advantages to the village which had been set out many times before. The Clerk was asked to enquire the likely cost of the path, to ask what the guidelines referred to were and to invite the writer, Ms Cook to a site meeting.

ACTION: CLERK

9.2 Visit to Leicestershire

Cllr Thomas outlined this visit and said that further information would be forthcoming through TRAMP. One possibility was to invite them to meet TRAMP here and compare notes.

9.3 Speed limits and control of HGVs in East Street

Mrs Wright raised the possibility of a 40mph limit in East Street, the control of HGVs and damaged street furniture. She was a fairly new resident and Members advised her of various actions that had been taken or were outstanding. Cllr Thomas said he would try to have a 40mph limit in East Street included on the TRAMP list. ACTION: CLLR THOMAS

9.4 The Coxheath traffic calming scheme

It was noted that this had been partly complete for some time due to other building work on Heath Road but should be complete in about six weeks.

10. PARISH PLAN

There had been a disappointing response to the publicity in the Hunton Herald. It was agreed to set up a one-off social meeting to try to move the matter on. An issue like the footpath would receive much better support from KCC Highways if it formed part of a Parish Plan.

ACTION: CHAIRMAN AND CLERK

11. PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

Two planning cases were considered in Committee.

ACTION: CLERK

12. PUBLICITY INCLUDING NOTICE BOARDS

The notice boards at the Club and the Hall were in need of replacement and the Clerk would circulate specifications and prices.

ACTION: CLERK

13. PERSONNEL MATTERS

The Chairman announced with great regret the resignation of Cllr Lorraine Redfarn who would be much missed by the Council. All those present agreed. The Clerk would advise the Borough Council of the vacancy.

ACTION: CLERK

Members agreed that it would be sensible for the Chairman to meet with his opposite number in West Farleigh and with the Clerk to discuss the terms under which the Clerk's vacancy would be advertised.

ACTION: CLERK

14. OTHER MATTERS FOR INFORMATION OR FUTURE DECISION

14.1 Salt bin in Barn Hill

The Clerk had received a request for a bin from a resident and KCC were visiting the site/

14.2 Red telephone box

The Chairman was aware of a red phone box which was available and which would be popular with some residents if it replaced the silver box. The Clerk would enquire from BT how much it would charge for the necessary connections. .

ACTION: CLERK

15. CONCLUSION INCLUDING DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Future meetings in 2007 would be on 13th September and 15th November. There being no other business the meeting ended at 9.45pm.